

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 AGR-10 CIAE-00 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 FRB-01

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R 310722Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1529

INFO USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMEMBASSY RABAT

UNCLAS TUNIS 0674

DEPT PASS USDA/FAS

RABAT FOR AGATT

ANKARA AND ISTANBUL FOR USDA/CCC STEPHENS

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, BEXP, TS

SUBJ: TUNISIAN COTTON INDUSTRY - IMPORT REQUIREMENTS

1. DURING VISIT K. STEPHENS, CCC AND REP MAJOR AMERICAN COTTON CORPORATION, MEETINGS HELD WITH OFFICIALS OF SOGITEX, LARGEST TEXTILE COMPANY IN TUNISIA, REVEALED THAT SOGITEX PREPARING MAJOR EXPANSION PROGRAM IN SPINNING WHICH WILL DOUBLE TUNISIAN CONSUMPTION OF IMPORTED RAW COTTON OVER NEXT TWO-THREE YEARS. 1974 IMPORTS WERE SIX THOUSAND METRIC TONS, PRINCIPALLY FROM TURKEY, SUDAN, EL SAVADOR AND IRAN; EARLY 1976 RUNNING ABOUT SAME LEVEL, SOURCED PRINCIPALLY FROM SUDAN AND USSR. SOGITEX WILL BEGIN PROGRAMMING 700 METRIC TONS PER MONTH DURING SECOND HALF 1976. REACHING EVENTUALLY 12 THOUSAND METRIC TONS ANNUALLY. SOGITEX REQUESTING BIDS FOR COTTON DELIVERIES IN SECOND HALF 1976. STEPHENS OUTLINED POSSIBLE USES CCC CREDITS FOR TUNISIAN COTTON PURCHASES.

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2. EXPANSION PROGRAM HEAVILY CONCENTRATED ON DENIM BASED ON SOGITEX JOINT VENTURE PLANS WITH U.S. COMPANIES LEVI-

STRAUSS AND LEE FOR INTEGRATED JEANS OPERATION IN TUNISIA. SUBSTANTIAL SMOUNT OF THE NEW SPINNING EQUIPMENT BEING INSTALLED IS OF U.S. ORIGIN. POSSIBILITY EXISTS FOR INTRODUCTION OPEN-END SPINNING.

3. SOGITEX OFFICIAL NOTED THAT TUNISIAN FIFTH PLAN (1977-81) WOULD EARMARK 100 MILLION TD (\$250 MILLION) FOR NEW TEXTILE INVESTMENT. PLANS CALL FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN SPINNING BY END OF 5TH PLAN AS WELL AS PROGRAM TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC COTTON PRODUCTION. STUDIES HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY RUSSIAN TEAM IN LATE 1960'S ON FEASIBILITY GROWING COTTON HERE, UNDER IRRIGATION FROM DAMS TO BE CONSTRUCTED (SIDI SAAD, SIDI SALEM). VAST MAJORITY OF TUNISIAN TEXTILE OUTPUT IS EXPORTED TO EUROPE, WITH REMAINDER OF EXPORTS TO REST OF AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE HEAVY RECENT INVESTMENT IN TEXTILE SECTOR, SOGITEX AND FOREIGN INVESTORS ARE MAINTAINING A HIGH RATE OF EXPANSION. U.S. EXPORT POSSIBILITIES FOR TEXTILE MACHINERY AND COTTON APPEAR TO BE GOOD.  
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## Message Attributes

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